

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 1744

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SEDU, PINT CH

SUBJ: UAW OFFICIALS MEET WITH LI CHI-TAO, VICE MINISTER OF
EDUCATION

1. SUMMARY. AMBASSADOR WOODCOCK AND UAW PRESIDENT DOUGLAS FRASER MET WITH LI CHI-TOA, VICE MINISTER OF EDUCATION JUNE 7. THE VICE MINISTER COMMENTED FAVORABLY ON SINO-US RELATIONS AND REVIEWED RECENT EDUCATION REFORMS. HE CANDIDLY ADMITTED THAT A "HEATED DEBATE" ON EDUCATION REFORM IS STILL GOING ON. HE SAID THAT PLANS FOR THE JULY COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMINATIONS HAVE JUST BEEN FINALIZED. ANAD WILL BE ANNOUNCED IN A FEW DAYS. END SUMMARY.

2. AMBASSADOR WOODCOCK, MR AND MRS. DOUGLAS FRASER (UAW PRESIDENT) AND SEVERAL OTHER HOUSEGUESTS MET WITH LI CHI-TAO, THE VICE MINISTER OF EDUCATION ON JUNE 7. THE CONVERSATION WAS VERY FRIENDLY AND RELAXED WITH LI REMARKING
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FAVORABLY ABOUT SINO-USR RELATIONS. AT ONE PINT, HE SAID THAT THE UNITED STATES IS A CAPITALISTIC COUNTRY AND CHINA IS SOCIALIST. HE JOKINGLY SAID HE WOULD NOT DISCUSS THE DIFFERENCES, BUT ADDED THAT "ONE PLUS ONE EQUALS TWO, JUST LIKE THE UNITED STATES AND CHINA."

3. LI GAVE THE GROUP AN OVERVIEW OF RECENT PRC EDUCATION REFORMS IN THE HOUR LONG MEETING. HE SAID THAT THE RECENTLY CONCLUDED NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON EDUCATION WORK ATTEMPTED TO PUT "ORDER INTO GANG OF FOUR DISORDER." HE TOLD THE GROUP THAT VICE CHAIRMAN TENG HSIAO-PING, WHO "ENJOYS VERY HIGH PRESTIGE AMONG THE PEOPLE IN CHINA" MADE THE KEY SPEECH WHICH OUTLINED THE BROAD CHANGES IN PRC EDUCATION POLICY.

4. HE SAID THAT PRIOR TO THE CONVENING OF THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON EDUCATION WORK IN JANUARY, SOME DELEGATES TO THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ENROLLMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION HAD RAISED SERIOUS QUESTIONS ABOUT THE NEW REFORMS. HE SAID THAT SOME HAD EVEN QUESTIONED IF DECISIONS BY CHAIRMAN HUA NAD THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE WERE CORRJSCAND IF THE GANG OF FOUR SHOULD BE CRITICIZED FOR ITS POSITION ON EDUCATION POKLICY.

"FRANKLY, THERE WAS A VERY HEATED DEBATE IN THIS MEETING AS WELL AS IN THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON EDUCATION WORK," LI ADDED. HE SAID THAT VERY FEW PEOOLE HAVE THESE WRONG IDEAS, HOWEVER. IN MANY SCHOOLS, THIS DEBATE IS STILL GOING ON AND WE ARE NOT HIDING THIS FACT. "WE HAVE STRUGGLED TO MAKE PROGRESS." THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON EDUCATION WORK PROVED THAT A LOT OF WORK STILL NEEDS TO BE DONE TO ELIMINATE THE CONFIDENTIAL

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INFLUENCE OF THE GANG OF FOUR. SCHOLLS STILL HAVE TO BE "READJUSTED" AND SPECIALITIES HAVE TO BE REFORMED.

5. MORE SPECIFICALLY, THE PRC PLANS TO EXPAND THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN CHINESE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES AND RAISE THE QUALITY OF THE STUDENTS. HE SAID THAT EDUCATION IS THE KEY ELEMENT FOR THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE FOUR MODERNIZATIONS AND THIS IS THE FIRST TIME THAT THE PRC HAS MADE EDUCATION SUCH AN IMPORTANT PRIORITY. A NEW NATIONAL CLLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMINATION WILL BE GIVEN IN LATE JULY FOR NEXT YEAR'S CLASS. LI SAID THAT LAST YEAR'S EXAM QUESTIONS WERE DRAWN UP BY OFFICIALS IN EACH PROVINCE BUT THE NEW EXAM WILL BE STANDARIDIZED THE QUESTIONS WILL BE PREPARED BY THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION. LI INDICATED THAT HE HAD JUST SIGNED A REPORT THAT MORNING ON THE RECENT NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ENROLLMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION. THE REPORT, WHICH WILL BE RELEASED IN A FEW DAYS, WILL ANNOUNCE METHODS FOR ADMINISTERING THE NEW EXAMINATIONS.

6. LI TOLD THE GROUP THAT GRADUATE PROGRAMS WOULD FORMALLY BEGIN NEXT FALL EVEN THOUGH SOME SCHOOLS HAVE ALREADY RE-ESTABLISHED GRADUATE PROGRAMS. STUDENTS WILL BE ENROLLED FOR TWO OR THREE YEARS DEPENDING ON THE COURSE OF STUDY.

7. UNFORTUNATELY, CHINESE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES ARE ONLY ABLE TO ADMIT SEVERAL HUNDRED THOUSAND OF THOSE WHO TAKE THE EXAMS. THEREFORE, LI SAID, THE PRC WILL ALSO BE EXPANDING TECHNICAL SCHOOLS AT THE SECONDARY LEVEL.

8. IN RESPONSE TO SEVERAL QUESTIONS, LI SAID THAT
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THE TOTAL ENROLLMENT IN THE PRC'S COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES IS "OVER 600,000." HE ALSO REVEALED THAT THE RULES ON COMPULSORY EDUCATION HAD JUST BEEN REVISED. ALL STUDENTS MUST NOW START SCHOOL WHEN THEY ARE SIX YEARS OLD INSTEAD OF SEVEN YEARS OLD UNDER THE FORMER RULES. COMPULSORY EDUCATION IN URBAN AREAS IS STILL TEN YEARS AND IN RURAL AREAS, SEVEN TO EIGHT YEARS.
WOODCOCK

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